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BEST BUY IN THE WEST

No Turning Back: California Black Caucus and ACLU Commit to Advancing Equity and Justice

Antonio Ray Harvey | California Black Media

The California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) and the American Civil Liberties Union California Action (ACLU) joined hands to host a forum focused on equity and justice on Jan. 21.

Discussions at the event explored what the State and everyday Californians can do to protect families, communities and individuals from impacts of Trump administration policies that have already begun to threaten priorities important to them.

Titled "Advancing Equity and Justice: A Policy Forum," the meeting was held at the Legislative Office Building near the State Capitol in Sacramento.

Secretary of State Shirley



Secretary of State Shirley Weber speaks at the "Advancing Equity and Justice Forum" on Jan. 22 at the Legislative Office Building in Sacramento. The forum was hosted by the California Legislative Black Caucus and the American Civil Liberties Union California Action.

Weber, Sen. Akilah Weber-Pierson (D-San Diego), and ACLU Action Executive Director David Trujillo were the speakers.

"This is the beginning of a journey. I want people to

understand that this is not a quick-flash-in-the-pan kind of issue," Weber said. "There will be lots of issues. We will probably hear about a new issue every day, but

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Governor Approves \$2.5B for Recovery as Sen. Smallwood-Cuevas Links Fire Victims to Resources

Lila Brown | California Black Media

On Jan. 20, Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Inglewood), a member of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), hosted a "listening session" at Pasadena Church in Pasadena.

The event was sponsored by the Los Angeles Black Worker Center.

Smallwood-Cuevas was joined by Sen. Renée Pérez (D-Alhambra), the Rev. Kevin Manning and others at the event that brought together Altadena residents affected by the fires, advocates, first responders and others to discuss the road to recovery.

"Today's listening session drew nearly 200 Altadena residents, business owners and community leaders, who received on-site guidance from



Governor Gavin Newsom signs a bill in Los Angeles alongside elected officials and government leaders, including Mayor Karen Bass, on Jan. 24.

representatives of FEMA, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), the CA Dept of Insurance, American Red Cross, CA Dept of Social Services, and CA Black Freedom Fund," said Smallwood-Cuevas.

"Big shout out to @

lablackworkercenter for sponsoring the event," Smallwood-Cuevas wrote on Facebook. "Let's

continue to create safe spaces where Altadena residents can voice their needs and receive equal access to relief, recovery and rebuilding efforts.

Continued on page 7

California vs. Hate Aims to Improve Reporting in Rural Areas

Edward Henderson | California Black Media

In May of 2023, California launched an anti-hate hotline and resource network, California vs Hate, to address a sharp rise in reported hate crimes targeting racial and ethnic minority populations. While data has shown reported incidents nearly doubled since 2019, rural areas of California continue to be underreported.

Kevin Kish, Director of the California Civil Rights Department, recently spoke at an Ethnic Media Services webinar offering his observations and highlighting the importance of spreading the word about California vs. Hate's resources.

"That lack of reporting out of rural areas is not a good thing. And that lack of reporting out of rural areas of our state is also reflected in the Attorney General's hate crime report," Kish said.



In fact, some rural cities now have higher percentages of Blacks per capital than urban areas. For example, Rio Vista, a rural area in Solano County has a Black population of over 10% and Weed, a town in Siskiyou County, has a Black population of around 8%

"Many of these counties are reporting zero or very few hate crimes. We know that when people are afraid, when they feel isolated, it is unlikely for them to turn to government, at least not without a trusted intermediary, a trusted person or organization who helps them do that," he added.

The issue is particularly

concerning for Black Californians as increasing numbers of Black individuals and families have moved from coastal cities and suburbs to exurbs rural areas over the last 40 years in counties and inland areas, including Riverside, San Bernardino, and Kern

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California Atty. Gen Bonta Sues Trump Administration Over Birthright Citizenship Order

Antonio Ray Harvey | California Black Media

California Attorney General Rob Bonta, joined by 17 other state attorneys general, filed a lawsuit today challenging the Trump administration's executive order aimed at ending birthright citizenship for children born in the U.S. to non-lawful residents.

The lawsuit asserts that the order violates the Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees citizenship to all children born on U.S. soil, a right upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* (1898).

"The President's executive order attempting to rescind birthright citizenship is blatantly unconstitutional and quite frankly, un-American," said Bonta. "California condemns the President's



The executive order would direct federal agencies to deny American-born children social security numbers, U.S. passports, and other citizenship benefits if their parents are not lawful residents. This policy would impact tens of thousands of children born annually in the U.S., potentially stripping them of their rights and eligibility for federal benefits like Social Security, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

attempts to erase history and ignore 125 years of Supreme Court precedent. We are asking a court to immediately block this order from taking

effect and ensure that the rights of American-born children remain intact."

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Trump Administration Rescinds Federal Funding Freeze After Court Ruling and Backlash

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
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President Donald Trump's administration on Wednesday rescinded a Project 2025-inspired order that had abruptly frozen most federal grants and loans, a sweeping directive that threw social service programs like Head Start, student loans, and Medicaid into disarray. The initial order, issued earlier in the week, sparked widespread confusion and disruption, prompting a swift legal challenge.

On Tuesday evening, a federal judge temporarily blocked the freeze, and by Wednesday, the White House pulled back the directive altogether. The order's reversal came after mounting pressure from lawmakers, advocacy groups, and affected organizations. The White House insisted the move was intended to "end any confusion" following the court's injunction, but critics called it a political miscalculation. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said the administration backed down only because of public outcry. "Americans fought back, and Donald Trump backed

off," Schumer said in a statement. "Though the Trump administration failed in this tactic, it's no secret that they will try to find another, and when they do, it will again be Senate Democrats there to call it out, fight back, and defend American families."

However, the administration made clear that its broader policies on federal funding remain intact. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt wrote on X that this was "NOT a rescission of the federal funding freeze," but rather a rollback of the memo itself to "end any confusion" created by the court's ruling. "The President's executive orders on federal funding remain in full force and effect and will be rigorously implemented," she added. The initial freeze caused immediate uncertainty, particularly in Washington, D.C., and Republican-leaning states heavily reliant on federal funds. Throughout Tuesday, the White House attempted to clarify exemptions—such as Medicaid—but the damage had already been done. Reports surfaced by people and organizations unable to access critical federal resources, heightening concerns about the real-world impact of the freeze.

The legal challenge that led to the order's reversal was

filed by Democracy Forward, a progressive nonprofit, which argued that the directive was an unconstitutional overreach that endangered millions of Americans. "While we hope this will enable millions of people in communities across the country to breathe a sigh of relief, we condemn the Trump-Vance administration's harmful and callous approach of unleashing chaos and harm on the American people," said Skye Perryman, the organization's CEO. "Our team will continue to bring swift legal actions to protect the American people and will use the legal process to ensure that federal funding is restored." The uncertainty caused by the administration's actions drew sharp criticism from organizations that rely on federal assistance. Melicia Whitt-Glover, executive director of the Council on Black Health, warned that the confusion threatens health programs serving historically marginalized communities. "While the Council on Black Health is not fully reliant on federal funding, many of our partners are, and they now face disruptions that threaten their ability to continue their vital work. This impacts the communities we serve and exacerbates health inequities," she said.

The administration's



President Donald Trump's administration on Wednesday rescinded a Project 2025 inspired order that had abruptly frozen most federal grants and loans, a sweeping directive that threw social service programs like Head Start, student loans, and Medicaid into disarray.

actions have drawn scrutiny of Republican-leaning states on federal aid. A MoneyGeek analysis found that seven of the 10 states most dependent on federal funding lean Republican, receiving an average of \$1.24 for every dollar contributed, while blue states receive \$1.14. New Mexico, a Democratic-leaning state, saw the highest return on federal spending at \$3.42 per dollar contributed, while Delaware had the lowest at \$0.46. Public Citizen, a government watchdog group, called the original freeze an unnecessary crisis that harmed

vulnerable Americans. "The incompetence and cruelty of this order caused nationwide confusion and anxiety, as across the country regular Americans spoke out about the human impacts—the loss of jobs, essential services, and harms to children among many other vulnerable populations," said Lisa Gilbert, co-president of the organization. "The White House overplayed their hand as they levied this Project 2025-inspired order and made it clear that they want to sow chaos and gut programs that help families. We will keep up the fight to make sure that does not happen."



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U.S. Rep Kevin Kiley Introduces Bill to Prevent California From Providing Medi-Cal to Illegal Immigrants

Edward Henderson and Charlene Muhammad | California Black Media

President Donald Trump's sweeping executive actions on immigration and mass deportations on his first day in office, Rep. Kevin Kiley (R-CA-3) unveiled a proposal to limit Medicaid benefits for

undocumented immigrants. His "No Medicaid for Illegal Immigrants Act" seeks to prevent states from using both federal and state Medicaid funds to provide healthcare services to undocumented residents, with an exception for emergency care.

Kiley, who represents

Northern California's largest congressional district by geography, argued that the bill would save California taxpayers billions of dollars annually.

"This common-sense legislation ensures that taxpayer-funded healthcare benefits are preserved for those who lawfully qualify, prioritizing the

needs of American citizens and legal residents while promoting fairness and fiscal responsibility," stated Kiley in a press release.

The bill comes on the heels of California's 2024 expansion of Medi-Cal, which extended healthcare coverage to all undocumented immigrants, adding about 750,000 adults ages 26

to 49 to the state's health program. Medicaid, a joint federal and state program, provides health insurance to low-income individuals, including the elderly, disabled, and children.

The proposal has garnered significant attention regarding the state's move to broaden healthcare access. While supporters argue the bill

is necessary to curb costs, critics, including healthcare advocates, contend that restricting Medicaid access could harm vulnerable populations and increase emergency care costs.

Kiley's bill will likely face opposition in the U.S. Senate, where Democrats have generally supported more inclusive healthcare policies.

ASM. MIKE GIPSON THROWS HAT IN 2026 RACE FOR BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

Edward Henderson and Charlene Muhammad | California Black Media

On Jan. 21, Assemblymember Mike Gipson (D-Carson) officially announced his candidacy for the California Board of Equalization (BOE) District 3 in the 2026 election.

The announcement, accompanied by a statement, marks the start of a campaign that aims to tackle uncertainty related to California's tax system, said Gipson.

Gipson also emphasized the need for effective leadership in California, especially as the state faces challenges such as devastating wildfires and the potential impacts of a second Trump administration.

"It is critical that our state has proven, effective leaders who will be diligent watchdogs of California's tax system," said Gipson.

He also highlighted his extensive background in public service, noting his tenure as Assemblymember, City Councilmember, and Police Officer, which has shaped his commitment to underserved communities.

Gipson says his campaign will focus on ensuring corporations pay their fair share in taxes, protecting taxpayers, and increasing transparency at the BOE.

"I'm running for the Board of Equalization to ensure our state has the resources needed to provide for the safety, security, and prosperity of all Californians," Gipson said.

Gipson starts the race having raised \$300,000 in funds and after receiving backing from local and statewide leaders, including California State Controller Malia M. Cohen, who praised his track record as a public servant.

"Mike has fought for Californians by ensuring unprecedented investments in affordable housing, strengthening our infrastructure, raising the minimum wage, and protecting taxpayers," said Cohen.

Other endorsements include former Board of Equalization chairman Jerome Horton, Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, and Los Angeles City Councilmember Tim McOsker, who all praised Gipson's leadership and commitment to transparency and fairness.

Gipson has served in the Assembly since 2014 and



He also highlighted his extensive background in public service, noting his tenure as Assemblymember, City Councilmember, and Police Officer, which has shaped his commitment to underserved communities. He currently chairs the Democratic Caucus Chair Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee.

HBCUs In Jeopardy of Losing Funding for Black Cultural Studies

By April Ryan

Democratic North Carolina Congresswoman Alma Adams addressed the Executive Order to pause federal loans and grants.

There is an overwhelming concern in the Historically Black College and University community that many key programs focused on race and equity will be impacted. Adams, a ranking member of a House Subcommittee on Higher Education and the Founder and Co-Chair of the Bicameral HBCU Caucus, issued a statement to Black Press USA once a federal judge temporarily blocked

President Trump's funding freeze. Adams, whose state houses 11 HBCUs, the largest number in any given state, believes, "President Trump is dismantling equity in education with the stroke of a pen by rescinding federal initiatives for MSIs." HBCUs are two hundred year old institutions that are one of the largest segments of this nation to create the Black middle class. Adams passionately expressed, "he's [President Trump] jeopardizing the futures of countless students."

According to the Trump White House, the pause is meant as a review period for federal loans and grants to organizations and agencies. A

White House official told this reporter Historically Black Colleges and Universities are fine. However, if African American History and or Woke programs are taught with federal funds, those monies will be extracted from the school and or program. Walter Kimbrough, the Interim President of Talladega College exclusively told Black Press USA the initial announcement of the funding freeze "was a shock to the HBCU community, which has continued to enjoy broad, bipartisan support." However he sharply questioned, "how can you be an HBCU without African American history?" "The terms of the

executive order is 90 days... It is a review process to say that there is discretionary spending... to a contract, to a non governmental organization." Trump White House Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy Stephen Miller also gave the press an example of teaching "critical race theory" which he says would lose the federal funding. "The pause on the federal loans and grants will involve "a politically appointed individual... who simply reviews and approves the expenditure so that we have democratic control over the operations of government," emphasized Miller who further acknowledge "this doesn't impact any programs that



HBCUs are two hundred year old institutions that are one of the largest segments of this nation to create the Black middle class. Adams passionately expressed, "he's [President Trump] jeopardizing the futures of countless students." Adams, a former alumna of North Carolina A and T and a former professor of an HBCU believes this examination of federal funding is "putting HBCUs, which are already underfunded but vital to our communities, directly in harm's way." Meanwhile, Kimbrough wants the 111

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EDITORIAL

We wish to plead our own cause.
Too long have others spoken for us.

Freedom's Journal, March 16, 1827.

WE WILL NOT BE ERASED

BY JULIANNE MALVEAUX

The 47th President has attacked our government like a bull in a china shop. He is doing his best to upend precedent and policy, just as he promised. He has issued hundreds of executive orders, pardoned convicted criminals (including himself), manipulated the truth through websites, abolished DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion measures), placed hundreds on administrative leave, and caused more damage in just a few days than most do in a lifetime.

Additionally, wholesale deportations of undocumented people have shattered families, disrupted communities, and upended international

relationships. Wow! The folks who chose to stay home during this election are regretting it. Some said he wouldn't be "so bad," but he has been worse than we could have imagined. Yet, this is what most voters—at least those who weren't suppressed—chose.

The Department of Defense, with its zealous acolytes genuflecting at the President's anti-DEI stance, decided to scrub references to the Tuskegee Airmen from Air Force training videos. Within days, his morally compromised and marginally qualified Secretary of Defense reversed that decision, reinstating the videos. This is not cause for celebration. The fact that the anti-DEI forces now in power even attempted to erase history proves

they will continue trying to rewrite reality. Erasing the Tuskegee Airmen is just the tip of the iceberg.

These people are so audacious they can turn a violent insurrection into a benign Capitol tour—though who brings weapons and bear spray to a Capitol tour? The violent, rabid insurrectionists have been described by the current President as "peaceful" and "hostages," even as many have been convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers. If they can erase the unlawful actions of January 6, they will attempt to erase the massive contributions of African Americans to this country. We will not be erased.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of Negro History Week—now African American

History Month—established our historical presence because of this nation's tendency to forget injustice. Many, like the President's sidekick Elon Musk, encourage people to "move past" historical guilt, as he did with Germany and the Holocaust, even urging them not to "lose" their culture to multiculturalism. As Trump's whisperer, it's likely he and 47 are having similar conversations about the role of multiculturalism and historical acknowledgment in contemporary society. They don't want to confront our flawed past; they prefer to swallow our differences with misplaced pride. Make America Great Again? When, exactly, was it great for the exploited?

The unsuccessful attempt to erase Tuskegee from Air Force training tapes is far from this administration's worst offense. Abruptly halting federal grant programs, including food assistance, impacts millions and is an unnecessary flex of power. Illegally firing inspectors general in several government departments is a bullying tactic. Someone doesn't want oversight—because they don't want illegal actions to be inspected. With skillful manipulation of the facts, they justify unconstitutional acts as necessary and legal. We are living in an era where



Dr. Julianne Malveaux

truth doesn't matter.

CNN anchor Jim Acosta abruptly announced his departure from the network on January 28, leaving an ominous parting message: "It is never a good time to bow down to a tyrant... Don't give in to the lies. Don't give in to the fear. Hold onto the truth and hope." I'm grateful to Acosta for putting it out there and disappointed that so many others are holding their tongues, currying favor with the Felon-in-Chief.

Where does that leave African Americans? We are living in a time both sad and empowering. What did we do before government assistance? Before federal dollars subsidized our Black History Month celebrations?

Before DEI programs? We survived. We thrived. We heard the song "God Bless the Child," and we went to get our own. We didn't get what we deserved—we didn't get all of it. But we got enough.

We taught our history in churches and Saturday schools. We gathered in salons in private homes. We passed down our struggles to our children. We didn't need the government to do it.

We will not be erased, no matter how hard they try. This is a Sankofa moment for Black folks—go back and reclaim what has always been instrumental to our survival. Go back and get the resilience. Go back and get the creativity. Go back to move forward.

We will not be erased

Merit Vs DEI

By April Ryan

“He [President Trump] is sanctioning... employment discrimination,” says Marc Morial the President and CEO of the National Urban League. Morial said he has talked to McDonald's executives who recently dropped their DEI efforts as well as Walmart and he stepped off an unofficial board of Facebook as they moved to end DEI without

consulting with that board.

Morial made these statements on the Black Press USA show Make it Plain. Make it Plain He spoke on the cancellation of diversity equity and inclusion through a new executive order signed in the first days of this new Trump administration.

The Trump EO focuses on the word "merit" as the new hiring protocol. The definition of merit the administration is adhering to is people selected

based on their ability. For the companies and federal agencies embracing the executive order Morial expressed "we have to judge you on your results." According to the Urban League stats the current American workforce of those under the age of 40 is made up of more women than it is men. Also, the workforce under the age of 40 is half white and the other half is made up of nonwhite workers. "When you start excluding people from

these businesses who will do the work," questioned the head of the rights group.

The National Urban League this week led a roundtable discussion with other heads of civil rights groups and leaders from other racially diverse communities on the challenge of DEI in governmental departments and private sector businesses. The leaders particularly Morial were anticipating the cancellation of DEI in

the federal government and private sector business is not a surprise as "Project 2025 telegraphed all these things would happen." Morial has talked to companies who have publicly said they are walking away from DEI. "Some are trying to have it both ways... as some have stepped away [from DEI] completely.

“When asked if the coalition of leaders would meet with President Trump, Morial emphasized substance over

a photo op saying, “we are not opposed to a meeting with the president, but it has got to be real.” Meanwhile, when it comes to Black buying power, Morial told Black Press USA Thursday that the black buying power in this nation is close to “\$2 trillion” and combined with other minority groups it is \$5 trillion” the Urban League also tallied the most purchased item by Black consumers in this country, GRITS.

“The Threat That Unregulated AI Poses to Civil Rights and National Security”

By April Ryan

The Lawyers' Committee on Civil Rights is prioritizing the threat of unregulated AI to civil rights and national security, according to its President and Executive Director, Damon Hewitt.

The organization has been working to engage Trump officials on AI bias, following data they presented to major 2024 presidential campaigns. Just days into Trump's second term, Hewitt says their priority remains the same, but the "strategy" will shift.

This push comes as the White House announced a partnership with OpenAI, Oracle, and SoftBank, initially formed in 2024, to build data centers and electricity generation under the private-sector-funded Stargate project. Hewitt has raised concerns

about how the administration, "by invitation," may allow companies to operate unchecked in AI development. Last week, outgoing National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan told this reporter that AI bias is a "genuine challenge"

that could undermine social cohesion and counterterrorism efforts. Hewitt welcomed the acknowledgment, noting that the Biden administration took steps to address AI bias through its AI Bill of Rights and an executive order. Now, he is working

to bring the issue to Trump officials, though a staffer emphasized that "this is early in the administration and there is more to come." Whether that includes addressing AI bias remains uncertain.

THE SUN-REPORTER
RELIGIOUS SECTION
 THE BAY AREA'S CHURCH NEWS & ACTIVITIES



Sunday School Lesson

By *Shunda Criswell*

Healing A Man Born Blind

Lesson Text: John 9:1-17
Related Scriptures: John 8:12-20; 9:18-41; 12:35-50
Place: Jerusalem
Time: 29 A.D.
Golden Text: "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:5)

Jesus spotted a man who had been blind from birth (see John 9:1). Many at that time believed such serious birth defects were the product of personal

sin. Therefore, His disciples wondered whether it was the man's sin or his parents' sin that had resulted in his condition (see John 9:2). But Jesus corrected their thinking: Neither this man nor his parents sinned.... This came about that God's works might be displayed in him (see John 9:3). Sickness, disease, and defects are not necessarily the result of personal sin (remember Job!). He is Sovereign in His works. That the man was blind from birth pointed out his seeming hopelessness. Sometimes

God allows negative conditions and circumstances in our lives in order to accomplish positive goals: our good, His glory, and bringing benefit to others (see Genesis 50:19-20; Romans 8:28). God had granted blindness to this man so that He could do amazing works in his life. Instead, the problem existed so that ... God could display His glory in the midst of seeming tragedy. He is the light of the world; Jesus had come to do the works of God (see John 9:2-5). (The Bible Knowledge Commentary and Tony Evans Commentary). Day means the time allotted for Jesus to do God's will (to do the work of Him who sent Me). We includes the disciples and by extension all believers. Night is the limit set to do God's works. In Jesus' case it was His coming death. As the Light of the world Jesus gives people salvation (John 8:12). After His death, His disciples would be His lights (Matthew 5:14 and Ephesians 5:8-14), bringing Christ to others. (Read John 9:4-5). Jesus placed clay (mud with ... saliva) on the man's eyes. Interestingly man was made from this same substance—the dust of the earth (Read Genesis 2:7). Yes, Jesus spit in the dirt. We should love how one scholar recorded, "Thus the word of God (i.e., spit from Jesus's mouth) mixed

with humanity (i.e., dirt from which man was created) provided the basis for the miracle) ... thank you Dr. Tony Evans. Yes God! By using his saliva, Jesus was imparting divine DNA to the human defect in order to bring about a supernatural transformation of his humanity. This was to serve as a physical illustration of the supernatural spiritual transformation Jesus came to bring (see Isaiah 35:4-5). (Dr. Tony Evans Commentary). Then he told the man to wash. Thus, his healing required an act of faith on his part. Jesus gave the man something to do, and the man did it. When his face was washed, he could see for the first time in his life. Also, in John 9:6-7, Jesus then told the man, Wash in the pool of Siloam (this word means Sent). This is located at the southeast corner of Jerusalem, where Hezekiah's tunnel channeled water inside the city walls from the Gihon Spring. The man was "sent" there and Jesus was the One "sent" by the Father. The man ... washed and went home seeing! People argued over whether he was the same man who used to sit and beg. If so, it was incredible that he could see. Perhaps, they said, it was a case of mistaken identity. But he himself insisted, I am the man. (John 9:8-9). First his neighbors didn't

believe this was the same man they knew (John 9:8-9). So, he had to keep saying, "It's me!" (John 9:9). They repeatedly asked him questions. Though he gave credit to the man called Jesus for healing him, he didn't know where he had gone (See John 9:10-12). After all, he had never seen him! So, the crowd took the man to the Pharisees (See John 9:13), where the moment of rejoicing would turn sour. Again, it was confirmed in John 9:10-12, "But if he were the same man, how was this possible? He gave a simple and factual account of how the miracle occurred. He referred to the Lord as the Man they call Jesus. Since he was blind at the time of the miracle, he had no idea where Jesus went." As it turns out, Jesus had healed the man on the Sabbath (See John 9:14). The Pharisees had already tangled with Jesus previously regarding his healing activity on a Sabbath day (Read John 5:1-19). So, it's really not surprising that they were unwilling to celebrate. Instead of rejoicing over the miraculous healing of a man who had been born blind, in fact, the Pharisees complained about the day of the week on which he'd been healed. After the man explained what happened, some of the Pharisees scoffed: This man is not from God, because he doesn't

keep the Sabbath (See John 9:15-16). Others insisted that a sinner couldn't perform such signs. So, they were divided over Jesus (Read John 9:16). (Tony Evans Commentary). Since this miracle was so unusual, the people brought the man to the Pharisees, who were highly respected in religious matters. To the Pharisees, healing (unless life was in danger), and making or kneading clay violated the Sabbath Law. When the Pharisees ... asked him about his situation, he briefly told what happened. The Pharisees believed that since Jesus "violated" the Sabbath He was a false prophet turning the people away from God (Deuteronomy 13:3-5). So, they concluded, This Man is not from God. Later they said Jesus was "a sinner" (Read John 9:24). Others concluded that the signs were so impressive that a sinner could not do them. (Of course, a false prophet could do deceptive signs [2 Thessalonians 2:9].) The Pharisees then were divided (John 7:43; 10:19). The healed blind man's opinion was that Jesus is a prophet. Old Testament prophets sometimes performed miracles which marked them out as God's men. Jesus is the light of the world to those who are in darkness. Amen. Be Blessed!

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 94124
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Rev. Kenneth R. Reece
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Sunday School 9:00 am
 Morning Worship 10:25: am
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 Baptism Every 2nd Sunday
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 Abundant Life Recovery Ministry 6:30 pm Mondays

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 Bible Study 10-11 am
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1311 Quesada ave.
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 94124
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Morning Worship 10:15: am
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 Morning worship - 10:15 am
 Radio: Sunday 9:30 am KDVA
 TV: Tuesday and Friday 8:30am
 KTLN Total Living Network

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275 Divisadero Street
 San Francisco, CA.

Sunday School 9:15 am
 Morning Worship 10:45: am
 Evening Worship 7:30 pm

Mount Calvary Baptist Church

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 (Cubberly Community CTR)
 Palo Alto, CA. 94306
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 Pastor

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Rev. Derrick Lomax
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Sun Reporter

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Equity and Justice Continued from page 1

we should be prepared to understand what we've done, where we are, and how we need to move forward."

On his first day in office, President Donald Trump issued an executive order to end what he calls "Wasteful government DEI programs and preferencing," that resulted from former President Joe Biden's Executive Order 13985. He stated that the Biden Administration "forced illegal and immoral discrimination programs," under the banner of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and implemented them at various federal government departments and agencies.

"The public release of these plans demonstrated immense public waste and shameful discrimination. That ends today," Trump stated

concerning Executive Order 13985. "Americans deserve a government committed to serving every person with equal dignity and respect, and to expending precious taxpayer resources only on making America great."

Just days after the executive orders were issued to clamp down on DEI initiatives, federal government entities began removing resources for underrepresented Americans from their web pages.

Trujillo said safeguarding communities' freedoms is the "civil rights fight of our lifetimes" and he pledged that the ACLU and its California affiliates will continue to fight for civil rights and justice.

"On Monday (inauguration day), Trump had his say (and) on Tuesday we had our response right here, including the ACLU filing two lawsuits challenging some executive orders," Trujillo said. "We sit on the laurels of our

ancestors, on the hard work that they did, and we must continue the fight."

Presenters addressing public policy priorities included Eva Bitran, Director of Immigrants' Rights, ACLU of Southern California; Nicole Ozer, Technology and Civil Liberties

Director, ACLU of Northern California, Duke Cooney, Legislative Advocate, ACLU California Action; and Amir Whitaker, Senior Policy Counsel at the ACLU of Southern California.

Trujillo said the ACLU filed its first challenge against Trump's attempt to end birthright citizenship in the United States.

Earlier in the day, ACLU leaders gathered at the State Capitol to urge state policymakers to lead the national fight against the Trump administration's policies. In solidarity, Sen.

Maria Elena Durazo (D-Los Angeles) and CLBC member, Assemblymember Mike Gipson (D-Carson), attended the news conference.

ACLU's Chief Political and Advocacy Officer Deirdre Schifeling, who attended the forum at the Legislative Building as well, said, anticipating the rollout of Trump's agenda, ACLU affiliates have been preparing. She said the intention is to "defeat, delay and dilute" the President's agenda at the state and local level.

"This moment of urgency calls for a people's movement," Shifeling said to reporters in front of the State Capitol. "And with 40 million people who call this state home and as the fifth largest economy in the world, California has the opportunity to lead on the frontlines of the movement. California's leaders must act now and fight Trump's extreme agenda."

Gov. \$2.5B Recovery Continued from page 1

In a move to assist Los Angeles County in its recovery from recent firestorms that devastated tens of thousands of residents, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a \$2.5 billion bipartisan relief package on Jan. 23.

Flanked by legislative leaders, local officials, and community advocates, Newsom assured the affected communities that help is on the way.

"This \$2.5 billion relief package will immediately bolster emergency response efforts, remove debris, and provide funding to rebuild homes, schools, and infrastructure," said Newsom at the bill signing at Willard Elementary School in Pasadena. "We want to make sure Los Angeles comes back stronger than ever."

The relief package, authorized under ABx1-4, authored by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino) and SBx1-3 by Sen. Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), provides critical resources to address the firestorm's impact.

A total of \$2.5 billion has been designated for emergency response efforts, debris removal, hazard mitigation, and shelter support for displaced residents. Additionally, \$4 million has been allocated to expedite rebuilding efforts

by providing planning and inspection resources to local governments, ensuring a swift recovery. Another \$1 million is earmarked for the rebuilding of fire-damaged school facilities, particularly benefiting the Los Angeles Unified and Pasadena Unified school districts.

In addition to these funds, Newsom issued executive orders last week to provide tax relief for affected residents; streamline rebuilding by suspending CEQA permitting requirements; and protect survivors from price gouging. In collaboration with major mortgage lenders, the state has also introduced mortgage relief options for homeowners who have suffered losses due to the disaster.

Among the communities most impacted by the disaster is Altadena, an unincorporated

area adjacent to Pasadena, home to a thriving historically Black neighborhood. Beginning in the early 20th century, Altadena became a refuge for Black American families facing housing discrimination elsewhere due to redlining. Altadena remains an enclave of middle-class Black families where the Black homeownership rate outpaces that of other cities and towns in California and around the country.

The devastation from the fires has left many of the affected families in Pasadena and Altadena pondering options to rebuild as they contemplate how they will protect the historic area's rich Black history.

"Altadena is more than just a neighborhood. It's a living history of Black excellence and perseverance," said local community leader the Rev. James Daniels. "This relief package is critical to ensuring families can rebuild, stay in their homes, and preserve this legacy."

State officials have committed to working closely with local leaders to ensure

an equitable recovery process and prevent displacement.

At the news conference, Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas emphasized that the funding is not just about rebuilding infrastructure, but about restoring communities and helping residents regain stability in their lives.

"Last week, my colleagues and I made a commitment to act quickly and urgently to help those affected by these catastrophic wildfires," said Rivas. "We are delivering on that promise today with \$2.5 billion in critical funding that will expedite the cleanup of devastated neighborhoods, provide resources to rebuild schools, and ensure affected families receive the assistance they need."

"We are grateful for the bipartisan support that made this relief package possible, because when disaster strikes, we must put politics aside and focus on the needs of our people," he continued.

Senate President Pro Tempore Mike McGuire reinforced the urgency of continued support and called the \$2.5 billion allocation a "down payment"

The ACLU and its affiliates called on state policymakers to promote priorities to protect vulnerable communities in California such as creating a permanent funding source that would bolster affordable housing access. They also asked the

members of the Legislature to protect personal information from federal abuse and prevent the Trump administration from tracking immigrants or people seeking reproductive or gender-affirming care.

Whitaker warned that the Department of Education (DOE) is in the crosshairs of the Trump administration. He said eliminating the DOE would undermine educational programs for students of color, put restrictions on federal funding for teaching history, and limit the capacity of school districts to combat racial bias.

"He's threatening to eliminate the Department of Education, which houses

the office of Civil Rights that investigates such things as bullying, which is most likely to impact Black students," Whittaker said. "Black students already face unique challenges here and throughout the country because of the specific history of discrimination that are revealed in many statistics."

Weber-Pierson said, "We are entering very uncertain times."

"It is extremely important that we don't get so discouraged and disheartened that we give up," she said. "We should use this as an opportunity to prepare: to learn as much as we can, to fight back as much as we can, to build up our communities and people as much as we can so that in the future it doesn't matter who is in office. We will know that everyone in the State of California -- and across this great nation -- will be taken care of equitably."

on future relief efforts. "Tens of thousands of Los Angeles residents have lost their homes and livelihoods," McGuire stated. "We have to ensure they receive the support necessary to rebuild their lives and businesses. This is just the beginning. California will continue to fight for additional resources from federal and private partners to help these communities fully recover."

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass also expressed gratitude for the swift response from state leadership.

"This package will allow us to move forward urgently with cleanup efforts and help families rebuild their lives," she said.

Residents and business owners impacted by the firestorm can apply for disaster assistance through multiple channels. Online applications can be submitted at DisasterAssistance.gov, while phone assistance is available by calling 800-621-3362. The FEMA Mobile App, which provides resources in over 40 languages, is also accessible to those seeking aid. Additionally, the state

has launched CA.gov/LAfires, a centralized hub offering information on housing assistance, financial relief programs, and guidance on rebuilding efforts.

Newsom emphasized that this funding is only the beginning of the state's commitment to rebuilding Los Angeles. "We want to ensure that we don't just provide relief today but continue supporting communities in the long run," he stated. As state officials assess additional recovery needs, Newsom pledged to seek further support from federal agencies and private sector partners to ensure a comprehensive and sustained rebuilding process.

The same day, Bass shared some good news from the Small Business Administration (SBA) for families impacted by the fires on the social media platform X.

"SBAGov has approved \$52 million in disaster loans," she wrote. More than \$50 million of that is for homeowners and renters. Apply for relief: sba.gov/disaster. The deadline to apply is March 10."

CAvsHATE Continued from page 1

counties in Southern

California and Solano County, San Joaquin and Kings counties in Northern California.

In fact, some rural cities now have higher percentages of Blacks per capita than urban areas. For example, Rio Vista, a rural area in Solano County has a Black population of over 10% and Weed, a town in Siskiyou County, has a Black population of around 8%.

Some barriers to reporting, Kish shared, were language

limitations, mistrust of local government and lack of knowledge of what qualifies as a hate crime.

"California versus hate was designed to overcome these barriers specifically. It is designed to help everyone who experiences hate, no matter who they are, no matter where they are in our state, and no matter whether what they experienced was in fact a crime."

In the hotline's first year of existence, it received over 1,000 reports. The most commonly cited form of

hate was based on race and ethnicity. 560 of those reports were confirmed incidents and race and ethnicity made up 35% of the reports. Of those, anti-Black bias was the most common, followed by anti-Latino and anti-Asian bias.

After race and ethnicity, the most common frequently cited basis was gender identity and sexual orientation.

Marlene Thomas, Executive Director of the Imperial Valley Social Justice Committee, also spoke at the webinar to shed light on what it is like to offer services in a rural

county of California

that experiences incidents of hate yet experiences low numbers of reporting.

"We had a Stop the Hate conference and the chief of police and the sheriff who were there and presented. They went through the whole reporting process that you have to, to do, but they had only two complaints. And I feel, and I know that they had to have more than that, but they didn't. But why? The reason is lack of awareness of what the people can really do. And then believe it or not, as small as

rural communities are, we are not getting information. And we have to increase public awareness to that fact."

Thomas shared that the most common incidents of hate in her county are directed towards the trans community.

The hotline operates as a tool to connect people who experience hate with culturally competent resources in the communities where they live to the resources they need. If the reported incident requires police assistance, the hotline can provide this. Grassroots organizations across the

states have also partnered with the hotline offering legal services, counseling, financial assistance and more.

If you, or someone you know, has been the target of hate or witnessed an act of hate, you can call the hotline at 833-866-4283. It is open Monday to Friday from 9 a. m. to 6 p. m. You can also leave a message, or you can report online at any time by visiting CaliforniaVsHate.org. You can report in 15 different written languages and operators can talk to you in over 200 languages.

Trump Sued Continued from page 1

The executive order would direct federal agencies to deny American-born children social security numbers, U.S. passports, and other citizenship benefits if their parents are not lawful residents. This policy would

impact tens of thousands of children born annually in the U.S., potentially stripping them of their rights and eligibility for federal benefits like Social Security, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

"The President has overstepped his authority

by a mile with this order, and we will hold him accountable," Bonta added.

Gov. Gavin Newsom expressed similar sentiments about the executive order.

"This is unconstitutional," Newsom stated, simply opposing Trump's decision.

The lawsuit argues that the order would disrupt vital public programs, particularly in states like California, where around 24,500 children are born to non-citizen parents each year.

The attorneys general sought a nationwide preliminary injunction to block the order

while litigation continues, emphasizing the potential for irreparable harm to children and critical state programs. In addition to California, the lawsuit includes attorneys general from New Jersey, Massachusetts, and 15 other states, as well as the City of San Francisco.

On Jan. 23, Seattle-based U.S. District Judge John Coughenour issued a temporary restraining order blocking Trump

administration from enforcing or implementing the executive order.



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